

Montana DNRC Water Resources Division, State Water Projects Bureau  
Categorical Exclusion Checklist

PROJECT: St. Mary Canal Drops Geotechnical Drilling and Test Pits DATE: 18 August 2011

NATURE OF ACTION:

DNRC and TD&H will contract with a geotechnical drilling firm to drill 30 hollow stem auger holes along the proposed realignment of the canal to bypass the existing drops. One alternative would eliminate 4 of the 5 existing drops and put all the drop in one location. The more likely alternative would bypass 3 of the existing drop and end up with a two-drop system. After analysis of the samples collected during the drilling phase, locations will be identified for excavated testpits. As many testpits will be excavated as can be done in a 2 or 3-day timeframe. All data will be shared with the Blackfeet Tribe and USBR.

EXCLUSION CATEGORY:

Data Collection

EVALUATION OF CRITERIA FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

- |     |  |                                       |
|-----|--|---------------------------------------|
| (1) | This action or group of actions would have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.   | No <u>X</u> Uncertain _____ Yes _____ |
| (2) | This action or group of actions would involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.   | No <u>X</u> Uncertain _____ Yes _____ |
| (3) | This action would have significant adverse effects on public health or safety.   | No <u>X</u> Uncertain _____ Yes _____ |
| (4) | This action would have an adverse effect on unique geographical features such as wetlands, wild or scenic rivers, rivers in the nationwide inventory, refuges, floodplains, or prime or unique farmlands | No <u>X</u> Uncertain _____ Yes _____ |
| (5) | The action will have highly controversial environmental effects.   | No <u>X</u> Uncertain _____ Yes _____ |
| (6) | The action will have highly uncertain environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risk.   | No <u>X</u> Uncertain _____ Yes _____ |
| (7) | This action will establish a precedent for future actions.   | No _____ Uncertain <u>X</u> Yes _____ |
| (8) | This action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant effects.  | No <u>X</u> Uncertain _____ Yes _____ |

- (9) This action will affect properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. No historic properties affected   X    
Historic properties affected \_\_\_\_\_  
A. No adverse affect \_\_\_\_\_  
B. Adverse affect \_\_\_\_\_
- (10) This action will adversely affect a species listed or proposed to be listed as Endangered or Threatened. No   X   Uncertain \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- (11) This action threatens to violate State, local, or tribal law or requirements imposed for protection of the environment. No   X   Uncertain \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ Federal, \_\_\_\_\_
- (12) This action will affect Indian Trust Assets (ITAs). No   X   Uncertain \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_

MEPA ACTION RECOMMENDED:

CEC   X   EA \_\_\_\_\_ EIS \_\_\_\_\_

ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRUST ASSET COMMITMENTS, EXPLANATION AND/OR  
REMARKS: None

ACTION REQUESTED BY: John Sanders DATE: 8/18/11

MEPA RECOMMENDED: James P. Donit DATE: 8/18/11

NHPA RECOMMENDED: Patrick J. Remme DATE: 8/18/2011

Blackfeet THPO Concurrence: Erin King, Blackfeet THPO DATE: 8/23/2011

DIVISION ADMINISTRATOR APPROVED: TJL DATE: 8/29/11